

Sailboat Rental Safety

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Committee
October 2008

1. Alcohol and many other drugs are dangerous when combined with any form of boating. Do not operate any boat while impaired by alcohol or drugs.
2. Sailing often requires passengers to shift weight within the boat, enhancing the possibility of slipping and falling into the water if outside the cockpit or cabin. Be cautious about proper loading of passengers and gear while keeping passengers in safe seating and riding locations.
3. You and your passengers must know the location and proper use of life jackets and other safety equipment for the boat you are renting. It is always best to wear a life jacket when on the water, and children under the age specified by law are required to wear one.
4. When boating after sunset and before sunrise, or when visibility is poor, your boat must display navigation lights. An anchor light must be displayed if you anchor for the night. Should a problem arise, you must know how to properly use the distress signals onboard the boat.
5. Most boating accidents involve collisions due to operator inattention or carelessness. Be aware of the dangers approaching from any direction.
6. The rules for meeting, passing and crossing paths of other boats are important.
When you meet another boat head-on, you should steer to the right (starboard).
To overtake (pass) another boat, you should pass on the left (port) side, leave plenty of room and yield (give way) to that boat. If conditions require it, you may pass on the right (starboard) side.
Crossing the path of another boat requires that you yield (give way) to the boat on your right (starboard). Any time there is a threat of collision you must slow down, stop or steer away.
7. Do not let anyone jump, dive or swim from or near the boat unless the motor is turned off, the propeller has stopped turning (if applicable) and you have checked the water depth.
8. The boat's motor(s) and other equipment such as generators and appliances (if equipped) produce carbon monoxide, a colorless, odorless gas that can cause death quickly. Keep anyone away from any exhaust at all times and keep the boat well ventilated.
9. If someone falls overboard or unexpectedly ends up in the water, you must have a plan. Practice your man-overboard drills regularly. Only help the person into the boat if the motor is off.
10. The rental company has rules aimed at protecting you and your passengers. Understand and follow the rental company's rules and the boating laws that apply to the type of boat you are renting.
11. Make sure your rental company has explained any specific local boating hazards and regulations so you can avoid problems on the water.

CHARTERER'S SIGNATURE: _____ Date: _____